

MISCELLANEOUS EXTRACTS.

ROMANCE OF REAL LIFE.

Some twenty-five years ago, a stranger—a Scotchman—came to Huddersfield and took lodgings, and after a little inquiry, took premises and commenced business in the retail flour and corn trade. He would then be nearly fifty years of age, and called himself Alexander Black, in which name he has continued to trade in Huddersfield up to the period of his death, which occurred some few weeks ago. From the first of his reaching the town, he paid attention to several females, and made offers which were declined. At length a young girl who obtained her livelihood by delivering milk for sale, listened to his overtures; but as her mental qualifications were scarcely deemed high enough for the "Canny Scot," he took the precaution to send her to boarding school and other places of instruction, to qualify her to be a helpmeet for him. In due time she was married in the name of Black. Fortune seemed to smile upon the Scotchman, for his business visibly increased, and also his means of enjoyment—a dwelling of a higher class being occupied by the couple. At length there seemed to be a turn to this good fortune, and most people were surprised to hear that a fiat in bankruptcy had issued against Alexander Black. The fiat was prosecuted; it was under the old bankrupt law when the examination of the bankrupt was taken in presence of the creditors, generally in the town where the bankrupt resided. While A. Black's examination was proceeding, the sheriff's officer in attendance, having reason to believe that all the property that Black possessed had not been given up, left the room, and went in search of the (Huddersfield) wife, to whom he represented that he had been sent by her husband "for that money," and that unless it was sent, he (the husband) would have to be committed to York Castle. This representation operating on the fears of the poor distracted wife, she went to the hiding-place, and produced £1,100, in gold, which she delivered to the sheriff's officer, and which was by him speedily laid before the assembled creditors, to their great astonishment and delight. This bankruptcy being worked to the end, and a certificate obtained, our Scotchman commenced this world again in the same line of business, borrowing 200*l*. to enable him to do so from the very sheriff's officer who had so cunningly stripped him of the secreted £1,100; and whose faith in Black's integrity seems to have been of an extraordinary kind. It should here be mentioned that the affair of the £1,100 so preyed upon the mind of the Huddersfield wife, that she was for a considerable period an inmate of the lunatic asylum; and in a few years after her release she died, leaving our Scotch townsman apparently a widower. A few weeks ago he also died—and then came the revelations we have now to detail. Fortune had again smiled upon him, and having some £1,500 to dispose of, he willed small portions amongst some members of the family he had married into in Huddersfield—some other portions to his housekeeper, and the rest to parties whom he named, resident in Scotland, and whom he described as his nieces and nephews. To this will his old friend, the sheriff's officer was made one of the executors. When one of the "nephews" came from Scotland to look after his interest, he came furnished with proofs to show that Alexander Black was not the name of the party who he had been so long known by, and that his real name was—, what, for the sake of the family in Scotland, we do not here mention; that the "nephew" was the veritable son of the ostensible Alexander Black; that the said son had four brothers and sisters still living; that the mother of these children, and the first wife of the said Alexander Black, was also living, being now upwards of 80 years of age; that at the time "Alexander Black" left Scotland, he left a second wife behind him, who is also still living; that he had fled from Scotland on account of these marriages, and his whereabouts not known for a considerable period.—*Leeds Mercury*.

ADVENTURE OF MR. SPRATT AT TRAFALGAR.—On that memorable day Mr. Spratt (he was master's mate to Capt. Philip Dunham) distinguished himself in a most extraordinary manner. After the *Defiance* and *Aigle*, 74, had been for some time hotly engaged, and the fire of the French ship, within pistol-shot of her opponent had slackened, Capt. Dunham, in the hope that a breeze, if being at that time a dead calm, would spring up and enable him to board, made his arrangements accordingly. At this juncture, animated with a spirit of impetuous heroism, Mr. Spratt who had been selected to lead the men in the desperate service that awaited them, volunteered, as all the boats had been disabled, to board the enemy by swimming. His offer being accepted, he instantly, with his sword in his teeth and his battle-axe in his belt, dashed into the sea, calling at the same time upon fifty others to follow—a mandate, however, which, in the general din, was not heard, or at any rate unheeded. Undaunted, though alone, Mr. Spratt, on reaching the French ship, contrived, by means of the rudder chains, to enter the stern gun-room port, and thence to fight his way through all the decks until he reached the poop. Here he was charged by three grenadiers with fixed bayonets, but, springing with dexterity over them by the assistance of the signal halyards, he got upon an armchrest, and before they could repeat the operation, disabled two of them. Seizing the third one, he threw him from the poop on the quarterdeck, where he fell and broke his neck, dragging with him Mr. Spratt, who, however, escaped injury.—By this time the British, who had been at first repulsed, were engaged in a second more successful attempt to carry the enemy's ship, and Mr. Spratt, who joined in the desperate hand-to-hand conflict raging on her quarter-deck, had the happiness of saving the life of a French officer from the fury of his assailants. Scarcely had he discharged this act of humanity, when an endeavour was made by a grenadier to run him through with his bayonet. The thrust being parried, the Frenchman presented his musket at Mr. Spratt's breast; and although the latter succeeded in striking it down with his cutlass, the contents passed

through his right leg a little below the knee, shattering both knees. [Vid. *Gaz.* 1805, p. 1404.] He immediately backed in between two of the quarter deck guns, to prevent being cut down from behind; and in this position he continued to defend himself against his old tormentor and two others, until at length relieved by some of his party. As soon as the *Aigle's* colours had been struck, Mr. Spratt presented himself on her quarter, swung himself by one of the boat-tackle falls to the *Defiance*, and resting on a lower deck port which happened to be up, was carried into the cockpit. At first amputation of his leg was thought unavoidable, but this he positively refused to allow. He was afterwards sent to hospital at Gibraltar where the sufferings he endured were of the most agonizing description, and ended in reducing his leg three inches. As a reward for his valiant conduct at Trafalgar, Mr. Spratt was promoted to the rank of lieutenant by a commission dated 5th December 1802.

On arriving at Gibraltar the pain Mr. Spratt endured was so acute that it brought on a fever, during the paroxysms of which the settings of his leg became deranged as fast as the surgeon could dress them. To obviate the inconvenience and danger arising from this, it was resolved to encase the limb in a long box adapted to the purpose, and to allow it to remain in that state for nine days in order to facilitate the formation of callus. Long before the time prescribed had elapsed, Mr. Spratt's sufferings were greatly increased by a knowing, unaccountable sensation, not attributable to the nature of his ailment. On the box being at length unlocked, a spectacle presented itself to the view of the medical officers present unparalleled in the history of their experience. Hundreds of maggots, an inch long, were stuck in the calf, with only the tips of their tails to be seen, the remainder of their bodies being imbedded in the flesh. How to get rid of this astounding production was now the question. One of the surgeons essayed the effect of his forceps, but no sooner was the instrument applied than the creatures broke off short.—A second doctor, however, more ingenious, ran to his medicine chest, and returned with a phial, the contents of which had the desired effect. This, the first case of the kind that occurred in the hospital, was accounted for by some of the numerous parasitical flies attracted there after the battle of Trafalgar having deposited their eggs in the wound. Mr. Spratt is still living.—O'Byrne's Naval Biographical Dictionary.]

A WOMAN'S OPINIONS OF HUSBANDS.

As a general rule, we know that men have, by nature, a superiority in strength which enables them to go through labours and dangers, mental as well as bodily, from which females should be exempt; and that, by education, they are qualified for exercising the several trades or professions by which they are to maintain their families. On the other hand, women are endowed (besides all the graces and amabilities of the sex) with a great superiority of quickness, tact, and delicate discernment, in all the every-day affairs of life. In all these, therefore, the husband ought to be completely guided by his wife. And this shows the wisdom of our ancestors in making the husband "endow with all his worldly goods" the wife he has chosen. The wife is dependent on the husband, and clings to him for support, just as a hop plant climbs on its pole, and a sweet pea on the sticks to support it, and as the vine in Italy was, according to the language of the poets, "married to the elm." But if you could conceive a hop-pole, or a pea-stick, or an elm, imagining that those plants were put there on purpose for its adornment, you would tell them that this was quite a mistake—that the climbers are cultivated for the flowers or fruit—and that the stakes are placed there merely for their sake, and must not claim any superior dignity or worth over the plants they support. Now, just such is the office of the husband; and this state of things is what people approach to more in proportion as they advance in civilization.—Among more savages the wife is made to yield to brute force, and is a mere drudge; in barbarian countries women are shut up; in more civilized they are left free, and have more control; and in dear England, the glory of all nations, they have a higher place, proverbially, than any where else.—*A Matron's Advice to a Young Married Lady*.

WOMEN.—Women are better than men. What sacrifices are they not capable of making; how unselfish are they in their affections; how abiding is their love! They enchant us by their beauty, and charm us by their conversation. They add grace and a softer coloring to life, and assist us to bear with its asperities. In our youth they are our instructors; in sorrow, our comforters; in sickness, the sweet beguilers of our misery. Whatever is rough in us they refine. Whatever of ruggedness there is in our natures they polish or remove. They are the only divinities on earth. Alas, that so many of them are fallen divinities. But who is it that makes them so? Who is it that takes advantage of their weakness, when that weakness should be their best claim to protection? Let him answer who abuse them.

Among the various beautiful traits of their beautiful natures, that of maternal love should be noticed with peculiar admiration. I have heard of women-haters, and am told that such a class of beings do exist. But surely they who hold the sex lightly, and who are accustomed to speak of them in terms of reproach, can never have been spectators of the watchful tenderness, the anxious solicitude, displayed in a thousand touching incidents of a mother for a child. They can never have witnessed her self-sacrificing devotion to her offspring, her patient and even cheerful performance of the many laborious offices of educational training, or their tongues would falter in the utterance of one word of detraction.

THE SAD POSITION OF SINGLE WOMEN.—Look at the numerous families of girls in this neighbourhood—the Armitages, the Birtwhistles, the Sykes. The brothers of these girls are every one in business, or in professions; they have something to do; their sisters have no earthly employment but household work and sewing; no earthly pleasure but unprofitable visiting; and no hope in all their

life to come off anything better. This stagnant state of things makes them decline in health; they are never well, their minds and views shrink to wondrous narrowness. The great wish, the sole aim of every one of them is to be married, but the majority of them will never marry; they will die as they now live. They scheme, they plot, they dress to ensnare husbands. The gentlemen turn them into ridicule; they don't want them; they hold them very cheap, they say—I have heard them say it with sneering laughs many a time—the matrimonial market is overstocked. Fathers say so likewise, and are angry with their daughters when they observe their manoeuvres; they order them to stay at home. What do they expect them to do at home? If you ask, they would answer, sew and cook. They expect them to do this, and this only, contentedly, regularly, uncomplainingly, all their lives long, as if they had no germs of faculties for anything else; a doctrine as reasonable to hold as it would be that the fathers have no faculties but for eating what their daughters cook, or for wearing what they saw. Could men live so themselves? Would they not be very weary? And when there came no relief to their weariness, but only reproaches at its slightest manifestation, would not their weariness ferment in time to frenzy?—*Shirley*.

THE SECRET OF FEMALE INFLUENCE.—The power of the women, in bending the stronger sex to their will, is, no doubt, greatly augmented when they have youth and beauty on their side; but even with the loss of these, it is not altogether extinguished; nor does it altogether consist in words and actions—it often effects its purposes by means less visible, and impossible to be described. But these means must constantly have for their basis softness and good nature; they must ever be such as to throw a veil over the pride of our supposed superiority, and make us believe that we are exerting that sovereign power which we consider as our right, when in reality we are obeying it. The least appearance of the contrary alarms our pride; and she who discovers to us her intention to govern by her power, or by her haughty temper, produces an effect which the other sex are not sufficiently aware of; she raises a disgust which all our efforts cannot conquer. In short, such conduct in a woman is the same thing as it would be in a lion to fight with its hinder legs, or for a hare to face about and defy the teeth of the pursuing pack; it is neglecting to make use of what nature has furnished, and endeavouring to use what she thought proper to deny.

We could point out, were it necessary, a great variety of instances where women have governed men by the influence of good-nature and insinuating manners; but we defy history to furnish one single instance of this ascendancy having ever been obtained over a man of sense by brawling ill-humor, and a visible contest for superiority. No man of feeling is proof against the softer arts of a sensible woman. Such arts are armed with an irresistible power. Almost every man is proof against her open attacks; they are the attacks of a bee without a sting.

BEHOLD! HOW GREAT A FIRE A LITTLE SPARK KINDLETH.—Mrs. Smith, said Mrs. Brown to her next door neighbour, yesterday, "your Sal makes a common practice of throwin' her slops right down in front of my door, and I don't like it."

"Well, Mrs. Brown, since you have spoke about it, I must say that your Bill does more than that; he chucks dirty water in our Sal's face, and even tore her dress a few days ago."

"Well, dear knows, Mrs. Smith, you needn't say nothin' about my Bill, for your Sal is the wust child in the neighbourhood; all the neighbours says so, and what all says must be so."

"All the neighbors says so, does they? and what does they say about your Bill, I'd like to know? Take care, Mrs. Brown—don't put me in a passion, or I may say more than you'd like to hear. People that live in glass houses oughtn't to throw stones."

"Say what you please, Mrs. Smith, but take care and don't violate the law, or I'll put you where the dogs won't bite you."

"Ah! you will, will you? you dirty huzzy! you put a decent woman in prison, will you? better take care you don't get there yourself; it's where you ought to have been, long ago, if what everybody says is true."

"There, I'll make you prove that—I'll make you prove that—yes, I will. Sal, get my bonnet and shawl. I'll see if there's no justice for me." And Mrs. Smith hastened off to a magistrate to get a warrant for Mrs. Brown. The magistrate and the constable were the only persons who made anything by the operation.

These scenes are of every day occurrence.

BEEF STEAK TO FISH.—Poor Quashee was so pestered by a Roman Catholic missionary that he consented to turn christian. He was duly baptized, and the priest changed the heathen name of Quashee to the apostolic one of John. One of the duties imposed on him was to eat no meat, but fish on Friday, which he very much objected to, and only promised to observe through fear of "certain punishment." The following Friday, however, the priest called on the negro, and found him busily employed upon a fine rump steak. The horrified priest was commencing a reprimand, when blackee exclaimed, "Dis no meat, massa; dis berry fine fish."

"How?" replied the priest sternly.

"How?" ejaculated cuffed, "I tell you dat you baptize poor Quashee—you sprinkle the watter in his profile an' say—'Your name no more Quashee, you henceforth be called John.' Well, massa, so I baptize dat ar beef; I sprinkle de watter on dat, an' say—'Your name be no more meat; you be called henceforth fish!'"

DRY FISH.—An Irishman angling in the rain was observed to keep his line under the arch of the bridge. Upon being asked the reason, he gave the following answer: "To be sure, the fishes will be after crowding there, in order to keep out of the wet."